

**Connecticut Society of Nurse Psychotherapists  
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**PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING MARCH 12, 2008**

**TESTIMONY ON SB 578 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING LICENSING FEES  
PAID BY NURSES TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

**Good morning Senator Handley, Representative Sayers and Members of the Public Health Committee. I am Dr. Lisabeth Johnston, APRN, President of the Connecticut Society of Nurse Psychotherapists (CSNP), testifying in support of SB 578. APRNs paid \$50.00 for an RN license and \$60.00 for an APRN license annually until the law was changed in 2007 by the Legislature and the licensing fees were increased by 100% for a total of \$220.00 for APRNs annually. APRNs must hold both an RN license and an APRN license. While it is understood that fees increase over time and these fees had not increased in several years, it was shocking to discover a 100% increase without any warning or discussion. Fortunately this bill appears to be addressing that steep and abrupt change of last Session and will bring the fees to a more reasonable and manageable rate of increase. Annual combined license fees for APRNs in 2006 were \$110.00, annual fees for 2007 were \$220.00, and this bill would result in fees of \$165.00 if figured on an annual basis.**

**Psychiatric APRN reimbursement is still considerably below levels that would make it possible or probable that APRNs would or could pay any fee imposed upon them by the State without some consideration. Many costs of practice have increased dramatically for APRNs in recent years including: malpractice insurance, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) certification and recertification, national Board certification fees, the number and cost of continuing education requirements necessary to apply for advanced practice nursing Board recertification every five years, and memberships in national nursing organizations that keep APRNs apprised of best practice issues.**

**Connecticut citizens are much in need of the health and illness treatment and care provided by psychiatric APRNs and there exists a scarcity of these professionals in the current healthcare workforce. Unreasonable and arbitrary increases in fees imposed on APRNs is not conducive to increasing this workforce at a time when increasing the supply of APRNs is in the interest of the healthcare of the State's citizens. The way in which licensing fees are treated by our lawmakers sends messages to our practitioner community that influence decisions about entering and staying in the field in Connecticut.**

**We are very pleased to see the thoughtfulness with which this is being approached at this time. We are also pleased to see the proposal for biennial relicensing in this bill and to know that on-line licensing is in the works. We hope that in addition to improving efficiency that will encourage the effective use of the currently hand-written data that the Department of Health has required from us on the back of every relicensing application since at least the 1970s. To the best of my knowledge this valuable information has never been used to provide statistical data for or about our profession.**

**Thank you for supporting SB 578.**